Minutes of the

Meeting of the Executive Committee

of the

World Council of Churches

11 – 12 February 2008

Meeting held at the

Ecumenical Centre, Geneva, Switzerland

These minutes have no official status until received, amended as necessary and approved by the Executive Committee at its next meeting. The official proceedings of the Executive Committee consist of a documented record of decisions taken by the Committee along with the texts of documents acted upon. The introductions to agenda items and summaries of presentations and discussions are prepared by the minute-taker for background information only, and should not be cited as part of the official proceedings of the meeting nor as such attributed to the speakers' names.

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1 INTERCONFESSIONAL COMMON PRAYER

Interconfessional common prayer took place on two mornings in the chapel at the Ecumenical Centre, together with the programme committee which was meeting concurrently. On Monday, Mr Graham G. McGeoch, Church of Scotland, gave a reflection on "searching for God", based on Matthew 25:31-46. On Tuesday, the Lord's Prayer was explored through song, scripture and litany.

2 OPENING ACTIONS

2.1 Welcome

Rev Dr Walter Altmann, Moderator of the World Council of Churches central committee, called the executive committee to order at 9:10 am on 11 February 2008. He greeted the members of the committee and welcomed them to this meeting.

2.2 Roll call and seating of substitutes

The Moderator invited Rev Dr Samuel Kobia, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, to call the roll. The general secretary reported that there was one apology only – that of Ms Nerrisa Celestine-James – and that the executive committee was seated with a quorum. There were no substitutes to seat.

2.3 Adoption of agenda

The executive committee met in decision session. The agenda was presented by the general secretary, and adopted by consensus.

2.4 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were presented. There was one suggested change, as follows:

> In Section 7.8.1 (top of page 73) the wording of the additional recommendation should be corrected to read: "That the general secretary give information regularly on the work of the US Conference and UN office in New York, together with some reference to the mutual cooperation of these two offices."

That correction being agreeable to the committee, the minutes were approved by consensus.

2.5 Sharing of news from executive committee members

The moderator gave news of members, and invited further sharing from those present of joys and sorrows from the ecumenical community.

2.6 Minute taking

The moderator shared appreciation for Rev Tony Coates, who is retiring from his position as minute taker for the central and executive committees, and welcomed Eden Grace, who is taking up this duty. H.E. Metropolitan Prof Dr Gennadios of Sassima, Vice-Moderator of the World Council of Churches central committee, added his words of appreciation for Mr Coates' professional work and personal friendship over the last several decades. Mr Coates expressed his gratitude to the committee for the opportunity to serve in this capacity.

3 MODERATOR'S ADDRESS

The executive committee met in hearing session. The moderator shared some highlights of his upcoming address to the central committee (noting that the title of his remarks has been changed from "report" to "address", indicating its nature as a short reflection on ecumenical themes of current relevance, rather than a "report" of events and programmes). The moderator shared that he has taken as his focus the 60th anniversary of the WCC, looking for insight and inspiration from the founding of the WCC and the ecumenical events prior to its formation. He will explore, in particular, the use of the word "unity" in those early days, and its holistic interpretation in mission, diakonia, and theological reflection. As we move in a changing ecumenical and religious landscape, the WCC faces critical questions. The moderator will call us to claim our heritage since Edinburgh 1910, and embrace the spiritual gift of perseverance.

The executive committee expressed appreciation for this preview of the moderator's address.

4 GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

The executive committee met in hearing session. The general secretary presented highlights of his upcoming report to the central committee. He noted that he and the moderator had consulted on their various remarks in order to make them complementary, at the request of the last central committee. Also, in order to allow deeper reflection on his report, a portion of the text was circulated to central committee members in advance. The general secretary's report explores the ecumenical and ecclesial realities of the world today, and interprets the programmes of the WCC in that light. His written report highlights numerous themes of importance; he intends to make his verbal report briefer than in the past, to allow for more engagement on the part of the central committee members.

The executive committee expressed appreciation for this preview of the general secretary's report.

5 CENTRAL COMMITTEE AGENDA

The executive committee met in decision session. The proposed agenda for the central committee was presented by the general secretary, noting changes since the last time this

document was seen. The council has just today received word that the Secretary General of the United Nations will not be available to speak to the central committee, as hoped. The Ecumenical Patriarch will preach at the service at St Pierre Cathedral on Sunday afternoon. There will be hearings on particular topics during the lunch breaks. In response to the recommendation of the last executive committee, there will be three persons available for pastoral support and chaplaincy to the central committee during its time together.

After discussion, the executive committee adopted by consensus the agenda for the central committee.

6 PUBLIC ISSUES

6.1 Proposed statements for the central committee

The executive committee met in hearing session. The general secretary informed the members of the executive committee that it is customary to review the statements that will be presented to the central committee. The moderator welcomed the new staff leader in this area, Rev Elenora Giddings Ivory, who then introduced her staff.

6.1.1 First reading of a statement on democratic governance and electoral process

Ms Christina Papazoglou presented a proposed statement on democratic governance and electoral process, reflecting on electoral issues world-wide, while also making a "case study" of the Kenyan situation. The general secretary remarked that the WCC has often encouraged churches to be involved in civic education and election monitoring, but at this time he feels that the churches are being called to a deeper reflection on the meaning of democracy.

Members of the executive committee offered their suggestions for improvement of the statement; it was then referred to the public issues sub-committee.

6.1.2 First reading of a minute on global warming and climate change

Rev Elenora Giddings Ivory presented a proposed minute on global warming and climate change, which addresses the impact of global warming on human populations and the environment, and calls on churches to engage in these issues ever more deeply. The general secretary clarified that this minute addresses the churches, encouraging their involvement.

The executive committee referred this text to the public issues sub-committee.

6.2 Report of the public issues sub-committee

The executive committee met in decision session. Dr Agnes Abuom presented the report of the public issues sub-committee.

6.2.1 Draft minute on global warming and climate change for recommendation to central committee

A revised minute on global warming and climate change was presented. After discussion and further refinement of specific language, the executive committee approved by consensus recommending this minute to the central committee for its consideration.

6.2.2 Draft statement on democratic electoral processes for recommendation to central committee

A revised statement on democratic electoral processes was presented. Dr Abuom noted that the sub-committee had shifted consideration of the Kenyan situation into a separate document. After discussion and further refinement of specific language, the executive committee approved by consensus recommending this statement to the central committee for its consideration.

6.2.3 Proposals for additional public issues documents

The sub-committee proposed that two additional documents be prepared, on Kenya and on Gaza. Bishop Samuel Robert Azariah further suggested a document on Pakistan. The exact nature of these documents would be developed by the public issues committee of the central committee. The executive committee approved by consensus forwarding these three topics to the central committee.

7 COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

7.1 Proposed communication strategy

The executive committee met in hearing session. Mr Mark Beach, WCC Director of Communication, presented a draft document on communication strategy within the WCC that will be presented to the central committee. The strategy paper recognizes the changing media and information context in the world today, emphasizing strengthening the overall profile of the WCC with a focused message (parts 1-2) and strengthening the role of communications within the organization (parts 3-7). In order to meet the demands of this strategy, the communication department will be restructured (part 8).

In developing this strategy paper, the communication staff focused on three questions: Who is the WCC? What does the WCC do? And why does it matter? Members of the executive committee appreciated the document and offered reflections and suggestions for its strengthening, feeling that an emphasis on the public profile of the council is extremely important at this time.

8 FINANCES

8.1 Proposed WCC income development strategy

The executive committee met in hearing session. Dr William Temu, Associate General Secretary for Finances Services and Administration, introduced some members of his staff, and called the attention of the committee to the proposed document on income

development that will be presented to the central committee. He noted that the governing bodies have been dealing with income strategies for many years, and remarked that this new strategy focuses on programme staff as key actors in income development. This will require a change in the mentality of the programme areas, which are not accustomed to thinking about fundraising. In addition, central committee members are also encouraged to engage in creative fundraising activities; the committee will hear various testimonies to this effect during the plenary.

In discussion, members of the executive committee welcomed this paper, and affirmed the importance of an integrated approach to relationship-building, communication and fundraising, noting that income development strategies will necessarily be specific to each cultural situation.

8.2 Preliminary finance report

The executive committee met in hearing session. Ms Elaine Dykes, Finance Manager for Accounting and Treasury, presented the preliminary financial results for 2007. She noted that some figures are still estimated, and that these results are not yet audited. She drew attention to particular areas of variance from forecast. Overall, the results are considerably different from expected, with a substantial increase in funds at the end of the year (as a result of both higher-than-expected income, and lower-than-expected expenses). This calls into question the accuracy of our own forecasting and budgeting mechanisms.

Ms Dykes noted that some of the under-spending can be attributed to delays in appointment of programme staff, and to a late start to the renovations of the building. Programmes P1 and P5, in particular, have under-spent their budgets. She noted that the balance sheet shows a strong cash position for the council.

Mr Mark Johnson, Finance Manager for Financial Planning and Budgeting, presented a revised budget for 2008, taking account of significant changes since the executive committee approved the 2008 budget in September 2007. The positive closing balances and the specific programmatic designations of income from partners have allowed for more specificity in budgeting.

The framework budget for 2009-2010 has also undergone adjustments, and will be discussed by the programme and finance committees of the central committee.

The executive committee appreciated these reports, and forwarded them to the finance sub-committee.

8.3 Framework for prioritization

The executive committee met in hearing session. Mr Georges Lemopoulos, Deputy General Secretary, presented a document for information entitled Framework for Prioritization. This document reflects the work undertaken to bring greater coherence to the deployment of staff and resources, as was requested by the executive committee in September 2007. He noted that this exercise involved not only examining budgets, but also looking at working styles and increased integration and synergy within the staff and with ecumenical partners. Some programmes and areas of work are still under discussion,

as this process will continue after this meeting of the central committee. Mr Lemopoulos noted three continuing challenges: the imperative to become more "strategic" in areas of communication and fundraising; the imperative to "do less and do it well"; and the imperative to increase the efficacy of the governing bodies and improve the profile of the council.

Members of the executive committee appreciated the document, and asked for clarification on certain matters, including the profile of the work on the Middle East, the change in strategy for the work on migration, the status of the Pacific desk, and the hiring of a consultant on Indigenous Peoples.

This document will be considered by the programme committee for refinement and formulation of recommendations for the central committee.

8.4 Report of the finance sub-committee

The executive committee met in decision session. Bishop Ivan Manuel Abrahams presented the report of the finance sub-committee.

8.4.1 Review of finance committee annotated agenda

The annotated agenda for the finance committee of the central committee was reviewed. It was confirmed that there would be two meetings with the programme committee. The meetings will ensure firstly that financial information could be shared, and secondly that the potential impact of recommendations under discussion in either of the committees can be identified and worked upon jointly before finalizing reports to central committee. A brief report on staff loans as at end December 2007 will be included when preliminary results to 2007 are presented. There were no changes recommended to the annotated agenda.

8.4.2 Policy for reimbursement of travel costs for governing body members

Following the recommendation of the executive committee in September 2007, the policy with regard to the reimbursement of travel expenses to governing body members attending central and executive committee meetings had been reviewed. The policy had last been reviewed and approved in 1988.

In accordance with the recommendation of the finance sub-committee, the policy had been revised to require that reimbursement be limited without exception to the equivalent cost of that which would have been incurred had travel been arranged by WCC. The policy therefore requires that governing body members consult with the WCC conference office in advance, in order that travel reservations either be made by WCC, or to agree that amount which may later be reimbursed.

The policy does not state the conditions under which a subsidy for travel may be granted to a member church, which is at present a matter of negotiation between the member churches and WCC under the subsidies policy.

Upon recommendation of the finance sub-committee, the executive committee approved by consensus:

- Adoption of the policy with regard to the reimbursement of travel expenses to governing body members, as printed in Appendix III;
- Encouragement to the churches to support the WCC by covering the cost of members' travel to governing body meetings whenever possible.

8.4.3 Compliance report: policy on offices outside Switzerland

The staff leadership group had approved in November 2007 the policy on offices outside Switzerland, which had been reviewed in draft by the sub-committee in September 2007. The policy requires that staff annually provide the finance sub-committee with a list of the offices outside Switzerland, together with an assessment of the level of compliance with policy.

The sub-committee reviewed the first self-evaluation of compliance with the newly approved policy. The evaluation identified actions to be taken to ensure that service level agreements be in place for each of the representative offices for which WCC relies on the services of a host organization. In particular, actions will need to be taken to ensure that staff working in the local offices hold employment contracts which conform with the standard defined in the policy.

It was confirmed that the work of the offices outside Switzerland, including the work of the Eastern European Office, be included in the overall programme plans, and is therefore managed and monitored from Geneva. To ensure an adequate management of risks in the local offices, work should be undertaken to improve the level of compliance with policy.

The finance sub-committee considered that wherever possible, WCC should work closely with the regional ecumenical organizations and national councils of churches, discontinuing the strategy of WCC offices outside Switzerland.

Upon recommendation of the finance sub-committee, the executive committee approved by consensus that, in accordance with the policy for offices outside Switzerland, the executive committee:

- records the closure of the WCC Ecumenical Women's Solidarity Fund, Croatia, on 13 December 2007, with transfer of the programme fund balances effective at 30 September 2007 to a new entity, Ecumenical Women's Initiative, Croatia;
- records the decision, arrived at after due consultation with the local churches and the Middle East Council of Churches, to proceed to closure of the WCC office in the Middle East in 2008;
- requires that staff proceed with the action plan indicated in the self-evaluation in order to improve compliance with the policy standards.

8.4.4 Pacific office closing plan

It had been reported to the executive committee in September 2007 that the WCC office in the Pacific would be closed in 2008. The executive committee had required that a closing plan be developed.

The finance sub-committee reviewed the detailed closing plan, which was a working document indicating the progress made with steps to date. There had been delay in the audit process compared to plan, which might result in some delay in the office closing date, which had initially been planned for end February 2008.

The finance sub-committee noted that the approach for the continued development of regional relations in the Pacific had not yet been determined, pending further consultation with the member churches in the Pacific, and considering the level of available budget 2008 at conclusion of the Pacific closing process.

8.4.5 Ecumenical Trust by-laws

The Ecumenical Trust is a trust under the law of the United States, formed by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA (NCCC) , Church World Service (CWS) and WCC, each organization being represented on the board of trustees. The Ecumenical Trust manages CHF 2.8 million in investment assets, received as endowment fund gifts in favour of WCC, and in particular in favour of Bossey and Bossey scholarship funds. The trust generates approximately CHF 120,000 per year in income distributions in favour of WCC.

The finance sub-committee reviewed the by-laws of the Ecumenical Trust. The by-laws had been revised and approved by the Ecumenical Trust Board, in order to meet the requirements of legislative developments in the United States. The by-laws define standard matters of governance, such as the functions of the governing board, appointment and term of members, powers and duties of officers, the requirement to maintain records and accounts, and conditions for indemnification of persons or officers.

The by-laws had been adopted by the executive committees of NCCC and CWS, and awaited approval by WCC executive committee in order to be implemented.

Upon recommendation of the finance sub-committee, the executive committee approved by consensus the by-laws of the Ecumenical Trust, as revised September 2007.

8.4.6 Staff benefits

The finance sub-committee requested a report on the annual increase to staff salaries. It was confirmed that salaries had been increased by 0.3% based on the movement in the Geneva cost-of-living index from September 2006 to September 2007. This increase was thus in compliance with staff rules and regulations.

The staff appraisal process for 2007 had not yet been conducted.

Upon recommendation of the finance sub-committee, the executive committee approved by consensus the requirements that:

- the staff appraisal process for 2007 be conducted, with a report to be issued to finance sub-committee in September 2008;
- a staff salary review process be conducted with reference to conclusions and recommendations arising from the appraisal process.

9 NOMINATIONS

9.1 Nominations to the committees of the central committee

The executive committee met in hearing session. Mr Georges Lemopoulos, Deputy General Secretary, presented a document listing the membership of the central committee committees. He noted that an ad hoc committee on communication is proposed for this meeting only, to consider the proposed communication strategy and make recommendations to the central committee. He also noted that, in response to the action of the last executive committee, a steering committee and a core group of the programme committee are being nominated to accompany the programmatic work of the council between meetings of the programme committee. Finally, Mr Lemopoulos explained that there is a movement toward naming and training rapporteurs of committees, to better equip them in their role within the consensus procedures.

Requests were voiced for specific adjustments to the list, to be considered by the staffing and nominations sub-committee. Members also discussed the ad hoc committee on communication, and felt that, depending on the adoption of a communication strategy, it may be helpful to name a group for accompaniment of the council's communication in an ongoing way.

The list was then referred to the staffing and nominations sub-committee.

9.2 Nominations to governing and consultative bodies

The executive committee met in hearing session. Mr Georges Lemopoulos, Deputy General Secretary, presented a document listing proposed nominations to governing and consultative bodies. The document was referred to the staffing and nominations sub-committee.

9.3 Report of the staffing and nominations sub-committee regarding nominations

The executive committee met in decision session. Mr Graham G. McGeoch presented the report and recommendations of the staffing and nominations sub-committee regarding nominations, drawing attention to revisions to the papers regarding composition of central committee committees, governing bodies and consultative groups. The sub-committee recommends forwarding these nominations to the central committee for action. The executive committee approved by consensus forwarding these nominations as recommended.

[The final nominations appear in the minutes of the central committee.]

10 MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

10.1 Membership matters

The executive committee met in hearing session. Mr Douglas Chial, Programme Executive for Church and Ecumenical Relations, presented a document on membership matters, addressing new members, applications for membership, and inactive members.

10.1.1 New member churches

The applications of two churches were accepted by the central committee in 2006. According to the Rules, WCC is now ready to welcome the Independent Presbyterian Church in Brazil and the Lao Evangelical Church into the fellowship based on the consensus of the member churches. The executive committee is asked to approve recommending these churches to the central committee for confirmation. It was noted that this decision was, in fact, already taken when the executive committee met in September 2007 (minute 7.8.2).

10.1.2 Role of permanent committee in applications for membership

The permanent committee on consensus and collaboration has requested to become part of the discernment process on applications for membership. Therefore there is a recommendation on the mode of their participation.

After some discussion as to whether the wording of the recommendation was consistent with the request of the permanent committee, this matter was referred to the staffing and nominations sub-committee for refinement.

10.1.3 Inactive members

According to the definition approved in 2003, there are now 46 "inactive" member churches. Mr Chial reported that staff are actively pursuing each situation for unique follow-up, but raised the concern that this high number of inactive members reflects on the health of our fellowship in the WCC. Mr Chial commented that there have been situations in which members of governing bodies have been helpful in restoring relations between the council and these churches. Executive committee members took this situation seriously and encouraged the staff to look carefully at the specific situation of each inactive church, seeking ways to make contact wherever possible.

10.2 Report of the staffing and nominations sub-committee regarding membership

The executive committee met in decision session. Mr Graham G. McGeoch presented the report and recommendations of the staffing and nominations sub-committee regarding membership. The sub-committee recommends that the executive committee recommend that the document GEN 08 be presented to the central committee for action in its edited form.

The executive committee approved by consensus the revised document on membership, for consideration by the central committee.

[The final actions on membership appear in the minutes of the central committee.]

11 ASSEMBLY

11.1 The next WCC Assembly: toward an expanded space

The executive committee met in hearing session. Mr Douglas Chial, Programme Executive for Church and Ecumenical Relations, shared the document which will form the

basis for central committee discussion on "expanded space" at the next assembly. The paper reflects what the council has heard from the member churches and ecumenical partners about their desires for the next assembly. There are three central committee members who have been accompanying this discussion.

A second document was then presented to the executive committee. It reiterates the points in the informational document, and also details three scenarios for how an expanded assembly might be constructed. It then recommends the appointment of an "assembly discernment committee", to deepen the discussion for the next central committee. In addition, it proposes that the general secretary initiate the search for a venue for the next assembly. It is intended that this document be forwarded to the policy reference committee of the central committee for deliberation on recommended action.

After extensive discussion, these two documents were referred to the staffing and nominations sub-committee.

11.2 Report of the staffing and nominations sub-committee regarding the assembly

The executive committee met in decision session. Mr Graham G. McGeoch presented the report and recommendations of the staffing and nominations sub-committee regarding the assembly. The sub-committee recommends that the executive committee recommend that the document GEN/PRC 02 be presented to the policy reference committee of the central committee in its edited form.

The executive committee approved by consensus the revised document on the assembly, for consideration by the central committee, and also requested that the various concerns about "expanded space" as expressed in GEN 03 be heard and carried forward by the proposed discernment committee.

[The final document on the assembly appears in the minutes of the central committee.]

12 INTERNATIONAL ECUMENICAL PEACE CONVOCATION VENUE

12.1 IEPC venue

The executive committee met in decision session. H.E. Metropolitan Prof Dr Gennadios of Sassima made note of the fact that proposals for the venue of the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC), 2011, had gone directly to the staffing and nominations sub-committee, without prior hearing in the executive committee. He then invited Rev Dr Fernando Enns to present the considerations of the Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV) Reference Group.

Dr Enns shared that the convocation is expected to gather 2,000 people. After much consideration of venues, with an initial preference for the Middle East, the reference group eventually narrowed the list to three sites: Colombo, Sri Lanka; Kingston, Jamaica; and Nairobi, Kenya. Colombo has subsequently been eliminated. Dr Enns presented information on the situation in the two remaining venues, and asked the executive committee to make the decision on the site of the convocation.

The committee discussed various factors, and expressed regret that it was not possible to host the convocation in the Middle East. It was noted that the executive committee was lacking participation in this meeting from anyone from the Caribbean. On that basis, the committee agreed by consensus to forward both venues to the central committee for a decision.

13 STAFFING

13.1 Toward a secondment policy

The executive committee met in hearing session. The general secretary presented proposed policy considerations on staff secondment. The committee referred the document to the staffing and nominations sub-committee.

13.2 Report of the staffing and nominations sub-committee regarding secondment

The executive committee met in decision session. H.E. Metropolitan Prof Dr Gennadios of Sassima presented the recommendation of the staffing and nominations sub-committee that the executive committee affirm the direction of the policy proposal on secondment and ask the general secretary to explore more possibilities for secondment by the churches and report back to the next meeting of the executive committee. The recommendation was approved by consensus.

13.3 Closed session on staffing

The executive committee met in a closed decision session. The general secretary reported on staffing.

13.3.1 Appointment

Rev Dr Samuel Kobia informed the executive committee that, contingent upon acceptance by the central committee of the proposal to combine the posts of associate general secretary for programme, and director of income monitoring and development, he intends to create an interim position of "Coordinator of Finance and Administration".

13.3.2 Contract extensions

There were no contracts of programme executive staff to be extended.

13.3.3 Vacancies

The executive committee approved by consensus the opening of the position of "Programme Executive: Inter-religious Dialogue and Cooperation" (P601 and P602) to replace Rev Dr Hans Ucko who had resigned. It was suggested that the specific areas of responsibility be specified when posting this vacancy.

13.3.4 Update on staffing since last executive committee

The general secretary reported that the officers, at their meeting in Geneva on 6-7 December 2007 had authorized the opening of a vacancy for the position of communications officer for EAPPI in Jerusalem (P305) and had received an update on the

hiring process for the position of programme executive for ecumenical lay formation and faith nurture, as follows:

Position of Communications Officer and Advocacy Officer for EAPPI (P305)

The hiring process is over and the candidate offered the position is Ms Irene AKRA (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem).

Position of Programme Executive for Ecumenical Lay Formation and Faith Nurture (P502)

None of the three candidates interviewed for the position as reported at the meeting of the officers in December 2007, was found adequate for the needs of the position. Upon the advice of the interview team, the general secretary decided to fill the position from within the Education and Ecumenical Formation programme after due consultation with the programme director in the context of the prioritization exercise. The outcome is that the position of Programme Executive for Ecumenical Lay Formation and Faith Nurture (P502) was offered to Ms Tara TAUTARI (Methodist Church of New Zealand, Aotearoa-New Zealand).

She will be replaced at the scholarships project (P503) by a 50% consultant due to the drop in funding and the reorganization which the programme director has started. The reorganization and streamlining of the project will be completed within a three-year period.

13.3.5 Departures

Rev Dr Samuel Kobia reported that the following staff will leave the services of the Council during 2008:

Rev Dr Geiko MULLER-FAHRENHOLZ, Consultant for the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (P301) on 30 June 2008 on a voluntary basis.

Mr Michiel HARDON, Programme Executive: Economic Justice (P306) on 1 May 2008 upon reaching retirement age.

Ms Jennifer ROSKE, Project Assistant for the Decade to Overcome Violence (P301) on 1 May 2008 upon reaching retirement age.

Rev Dr Hans UCKO, Programme Executive: Inter-religious Dialogue and Cooperation (P601 and P602) on 30 June 2008 on a voluntary basis..

Rev Matti PEIPONEN, Programme Executive for Ecumenical Solidarity and Regional relations, on 31 August 2008 at the completion of his contract.

Ms Anna EISENHOFFER, Project Assistant in Health and Healing (P406) on 1 December 2008 upon reaching retirement age.

13.3.6 Staff resumes

Rev Dr Samuel Kobia circulated abridged resumes of programme directors, programme executives and managers.

13.4 Closed session on the term of office of the general secretary

The executive committee met in closed decision session. H.E. Metropolitan Prof Dr Gennadios of Sassima introduced the matter of the term of office of the general secretary by reminding the committee that, at its meeting in September 2007, it directed the officers to undertake an evaluation of the general secretary and bring a recommendation on a possible second term of service. The current term expires at the end of this calendar year.

Rev Dr Walter Altmann summarized the evaluation processes undertaken by the officers. He then shared that Rev Dr Samuel Kobia had that morning submitted a letter stating that "for personal reasons, I have decided not to seek a second term of office with the World Council of Churches when my current one expires at the end of 2008. However, in order not to create a gap in the leadership, I will make myself available to serve the council as general secretary until my successor is elected and has taken up the office."

The executive committee discussed this matter at great length over several days. The committee requested Rev Dr Samuel Kobia to reconsider his decision. After prayer and discernment, he reported that he would not change his decision. The committee therefore approved by consensus the following minute:

> It is with great regret, and warm appreciation for his years of ecumenical ministry, that the executive committee has received written notice, through the officers, from Rev Dr Samuel Kobia that he does not wish to be considered for a second term of service as general secretary. His current term will finish on 31 December 2008.
>
> The executive committee therefore recommends that the central committee:
>
> - instruct Presidents in consultation with the Officers, to initiate a thorough evaluation of all the issues related to the process undertaken by the officers, concerning the possible extension of the term of the general secretary. Such an evaluation would seek to bring about healing and reconciliation within the fellowship of the World Council of Churches, to increase confidence, transparency and trust and to identify gaps in the council's internal processes and procedures. The report of this evaluation will be given to the executive committee in September 2008.
> - call an extraordinary meeting of the central committee for 27-28 September 2008 (26th arrival, 29th departure), for the purpose of hearing the executive committee's report of the evaluation and electing a search committee.
> - extend the contract of Rev Dr Samuel Kobia as general secretary until such time as a new general secretary has been elected and taken office.

Bishop Dr Martin Schindehütte and Ms Margareta Grape registered their dissent with the proposal of the extraordinary meeting of the central committee. Bishop Dr Hilarion Alfeev, Ms Iyabo Oyekola, Bishop Samuel Robert Azariah and Mr Graham G. McGeoch wished to dissociate themselves from the entire proceeding.

13.5 Election of a search committee

The central committee having decided to elect a search committee at the current session and having proceeded to carry out a paper ballot on 18 February 2008, the executive committee met in closed decision session on 19 February 2008 to hear the report of the scrutineers. Dr Soritua Albert Ernst Nababan, head scrutineer, presented the report on behalf of his colleagues. He thanked Eden Grace for serving as staff to the scrutineers.

[See the minutes of the central committee for the procedures adopted for the election.]

Dr Nababan reported that, at the end of the ballot distribution, the scrutineers verified that the number of ballots equaled the number of names ticked off on the list of eligible voters. They then verified that the number of ballots distributed totaled 125, and destroyed the undistributed ballots. At the close of voting, they sealed the box and moved to the hotel. Upon opening the box and removing all the ballots, they verified that the box was empty and counted 126 ballots. They eliminated one ballot that was not submitted on a numbered paper. They then entered all the votes into the computer and verified that 125 ballots were entered into computer. They declared that 1,236 names were submitted (not all ballots had a full 10 names listed) and certified that the top ten vote-getters were as follows (in order of votes received):

Dr Agnes Abuom – 51 votes
Ms Anne Glynn-Mackoul – 40 votes
Bishop Samuel Robert Azariah – 25 votes
Rev Dr Fernando Enns – 25 votes
Rev Gregor Henderson – 25 votes
Rev Dr Moiseraele Prince Dibeela – 23 votes
Justice Sophia O.A. Adinyira – 22 votes
Ms Margareta Grape – 22 votes
Rev Carmen Lansdowne – 22 votes
Mr Itayi Ndudzo – 22 votes

Dr Nababan stated that the entire voting tally is available to the executive committee as it carries out its mandate to secure balances in the search committee.

Members asked questions about the process of voting, and then discussed how to use the six available spaces to achieve all the necessary balances. It was noted that the procedure does not make that an easy task, and in future it might be necessary to indicate that the results of the "direct election" would be limited by the maximum number of people from each region who are desired in the final balanced composition of the search committee. However, having undertaken this process on the understanding that the top ten vote-getters were directly elected, the executive committee attempted secure balances as best it could.

The committee received information from some individuals that they would not be able to serve on the search committee. The committee also made note of the fact that the list of eligible search committee members circulated to the central committee did not correctly identify those in the category of "youth." After much discussion, a recommended composition of the search committee was agreed by consensus, as follows:

Dr Agnes Abuom (Moderator), Anglican Church of Kenya
Justice Sophia O.A. Adinyira, Church of the Province of West Africa
H.G. Bishop Nareg Alemezian, Armenian Apostolic Church (Holy See of Cilicia)
Bishop Samuel Robert Azariah, Church of Pakistan
Rev Dr Moiseraele Prince Dibeela, United Congregational Church of Southern Africa
Bishop Sally Dyck, United Methodist Church
H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima, Ecumenical Patriarchate
Ms Anne Glynn-Mackoul, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East
Ms Margareta Grape, Church of Sweden
Rev Gregor Henderson, Uniting Church in Australia
Rev Dr Margaretha M. Hendriks-Ririmasse, Gereja Protestan Maluku (GPM)
Rev Carmen Lansdowne, United Church of Canada
Rev Sanele Faasua Lavatai, Methodist Church of Samoa
Mr Graham G. McGeoch, Church of Scotland
Mr Itayi Ndudzo, Methodist Church in Zimbabwe
Archbishop Dr Nifon of Targoviste, Romanian Orthodox Church
Rev Dr Ofelia Ortega Suárez, Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba
Bishop Dr Martin Schindehütte, Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland

Substitutes:
Ms Outi Vasko, Orthodox Church of Finland
Rev Carlos Duarte, Iglesia Evangélica del Rio de la Plata

14 CLOSING ACTIONS

Rev Dr Walter Altmann closed the meeting of the executive committee with appreciation for the perseverance of the members in building consensus during these deliberations. The next meeting of the executive committee will be held in Lübeck, Germany, on 23-26 September 2008.

15 APPENDIX I – MEMBERS PRESENT

Officers:	Rev. Dr Walter Altmann	Moderator
	Metr. Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima	Vice-Moderator
	Rev Dr Margaretha Hendriks-Ririmasse	Vice-Moderator
	Rev Dr Samuel Kobia	General Secretary
Members:	Bishop Ivan M. Abrahams	
	Dr Agnes Abuom	
	Bishop Dr Hilarion Alfeev	
	Archbishop Vicken Aykazian	
	Bishop Samuel R. Azariah	
	Metropolitan Bishoy of Damiette	
	Ms Margareta Grape	
	Ms Hae Sun Jung	

Rev Carmen Lansdowne
Rev Sanele Faasua Lavatai
Pastor Antonio P. Malungo
Mr Graham G. McGeoch
Archbishop Dr Nifon of Targoviste
Ms Iyabo Oyekola
Rev Dr Larry Pickens
Rev Dr Tyrone Pitts
Bishop Dr Martin Schindehütte
Metr Dr Vasilios of Constantia-Ammochostos
Ms Outi Vasko

Ex officio: Dean Anders Gadegaard
Ms Lois McCullough Dauway

Apology: Ms Nerrisa Celestine-James

Staff: Mr Jean-Nicolas Bazin
Mr Mark Beach
Ms Catherine Christ-Taha
Dr Aruna Gnanadason
Mr Georges Lemopoulos
Dr William Temu

Minute-Writer: Eden Grace

Administration: Ms Ursula Zierl

16 APPENDIX II – MEMBERSHIP OF SUB-COMMITTEES

Finance:

Bishop Ivan M. Abrahams
Dean Anders Gadegaard (Moderator)
Rev Carmen Lansdowne
Ms Iyabo Oyekola
Rev Dr Larry Pickens
Bishop Dr Martin Schindehütte
Metr Dr Vasilios of Constantia-Ammochostos

Staffing and Nominations:

Bishop Dr Hilarion Alfeev
Rev Dr Walter Altmann
Archbishop Vicken Aykazian
Bishop Samuel R. Azariah
Metropolitan Bishoy of Damiette

Metr Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima (Moderator)
Ms Hae Sun Jung
Rev Sanele Faasua Lavatai
Mr Graham G. McGeoch
Archbishop Dr Nifon of Targoviste

Public Issues:

Dr Agnes Abuom (Moderator)
Ms Margareta Grape
Rev Dr Margaretha Hendriks-Ririmasse
Rev Sanele Faasua Lavatai
Pastor Antonio P. Malungo
Rev Dr Tyrone Pitts
Ms Outi Vasko

17 APPENDIX III – POLICY FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF TRAVEL COSTS FOR GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS

When the WCC is responsible for the cost of members' travel to meetings of the central and executive committees, arrangements should be made through the WCC conference office. In cases where reimbursement of members' own travel arrangements is requested, the amount of reimbursement should, without exception, be limited to the equivalent cost of that which would have been incurred had travel been arranged by WCC. Consultation with WCC conference office should be made in advance to agree the amount to be reimbursed.

For all travel undertaken at the request of the WCC, the following rules shall apply:

a) The WCC will be responsible only for the cost of a direct flight from the airport of departure from the person's country of residence to Geneva (or other location, if the meeting is held elsewhere) and return, without stopovers, unless a break is required because the length of the trip exceeds 18 hours. The WCC will pay the cost of a ticket, prepaid or sent from Geneva, or the cost of a ticket purchased locally by the individual or the church, whichever is less.

b) Flights arranged by the WCC will be by the least expensive routing, and taking advantage of any special fares or deductions available to the WCC. Members will not be asked to take a special routing if the saving is less than Sfr 500.00 or when the inconvenience is unreasonable, i.e.

   - when travel time each way exceeds 24 hours more than the direct routing;
   - when the alternate route requires more than two connections over and above the direct route.

c) If special routing or stopovers are required, or if the person makes his or her own arrangements, the WCC will reimburse only an amount equal to the lowest cost as indicated above.

d) Members will seek to reduce costs to the WCC whenever possible. It is understood that members who are able to combine a trip with travel to other meetings will share expenses with the other organizations so as to reduce costs to the WCC.

e) In the case of a member who does not attend the full meeting, financial assistance will be pro-rated according to the number of days attended, unless such limited attendance has been agreed in advance.

WCC authorized travel will be by economy class (air) or second class including sleeper for overnight travel (rail).

When a ticket has been purchased locally on authorization of the WCC, reimbursement will be made on presentation of an invoice or the ticket.

Other expenses necessarily incurred in the course of travel will also be reimbursed, as follows, and on the basis of invoices or receipts:

- moderately priced second-class hotels, excluding any personal charges or private telephone charges;
- local public transport or taxis as needed;
- the hiring of cars will not be reimbursed, except if prior clearance has been obtained;
- porter's charges, required airport taxes, visas, inoculations etc.
- other unavoidable costs in cases of emergency such as flight cancellations, strikes etc.

Personal expenses are not reimbursed.

All expense reports must include the currency and rate of exchange, with exchange receipts attached.